



TOWN OF COTTAGE CITY
WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 2, 2021
6:30 PM

IN ATTENDANCE

Commissioners: Amarche, Wheatley, Young, Urey (Absent), Givens
Consuella Barbour, Town Manager
Chief Ayers, Chief of Police
Greg Pinkney, Public Works Director
Brittany Gabriel, Office Manager

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Wheatley at 6:30 PM.

The Commission discussed the General Government Budget. The only line items that were changed were:
-5135 Office Expenses (increased from \$14,000 to \$16,000)
-Virtual Server Monthly Fee is a new line item (PEAKE suggested replacing the server. It would be storing our information to the virtual cloud PEAKE has)
-5085 Contractual Services (increased; this is for our Treasurers services. He has proposed going to a flat fee for the Town. The Commission wants to discuss further at the next meeting, comparing prices around municipalities, before making a decision) (increased from \$15,000 to \$24,000)
-5065 Emergency Relief Fund (decreased by \$5000)

The Commission discussed hazard pay for essential employees. At the height of the pandemic, the Commission decided to offer hazard pay to the essential employees. That hazard pay was covered by the CARES Act through the middle of December 2020. The Commission discussed how much money would come out of the salary line items if we continued to pay it out of the town's budget this year. It will cost \$12,000.00 to take it to the end of the year. The Commission discussed that it is unfair for essential employees to get the hazard pay when all employees are all back to work now. The Commission didn't see the need for the hazard pay to continue at this time.

The Commission discussed Black History Month. Currently the Town does not have any events planned for Black History Month. The Town has advertised other virtual Black History Month events going on in the area. The Commissioners suggested putting information on the cable channel highlighting different African Americans and what they accomplished, as a slideshow presentation.

The Commission discussed the Police Explorers Program with the Chief. They discussed what the program requirements are, what the guidelines are, and how the funding for the program works. The Chief mentioned this program is a national program and we are following their rules and guidelines. The Chief has already gotten \$1,500.00 in donations. The Town is a certified post now.

The Commission discussed the Port Towns Bus. Commissioner Givens discussed the billing for the bus particularly for the last quarter. He doesn't agree with the amount we are being billed. He believes it is too high per rider per trip. He suggested looking into another transportation service or programs that could help utilize our funding. The Commission would like to discuss and take a better look at the bus program.

The Commission discussed the Employee Handbook review. Ms. Barbour would like the handbook to be passed at the next town hall meeting if at all possible. The Commission decided to keep reviewing it and is looking to possibly pass it by the March meeting. A few commissioners requested to have a paper copy in their mailbox.

The Commission discussed weather related operations. Commissioner Givens was very dissatisfied with the recent snow storm and he discussed that the Public Works Department did not do a good job with plowing and disagreed with their whole assessment. Mr. Pinkney discussed his protocols and how he operated along with the rest of the Public Works crew while it was snowing. This snow storm had the streets covered very quickly towards the evening. The Commission would like to see improvement when it comes to snowy weather as well as a copy of the operating procedures.

The Commission discussed the Police General Orders for body worn cameras. Chief Ayers has gone through the General Orders and has made minor changes that need to be reviewed and hoped this could be done by the beginning of March. He would like to go live with the body worn camera policies by mid-February, early March. He would like the Commission to review the policy and hopefully vote on it at the next town hall meeting.

Public Comments - The Proctor family commented that they would love to see the Police Explorers Program keep going in the future and they are happy to help keep the program alive.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20pm. Motion approved. Motion by: Young, Seconded by: Givens
Amarche: Aye, Wheatley: Aye, Young: Aye, Givens: Aye, Urey: Absent